

home design real estate

SPRING 2015

nest

a quarterly supplement of
SEVEN DAYS
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Thinking about buying a home?



The NEFCU Mortgage Team (2016)
L to R: Joanne Revellin (201-271-3273), Anna McNamee (201-271-3273),
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SPRING 2015

Think spring!

Mud season in Vermont inspires more than just spring cleaning. These three months are the busiest of the year for home buying and selling — as well as prime time for getting back to the land (or maybe just starting seeds indoors). This issue of *Nest* — Seven Days' quarterly supplement about home, design and real estate — covers all that and more.

Wood, Sweet Wood

A guide to Burlington home buying by neighborhood

BY CAROLYN SHAPIRO

Village Greens

Vermont "agritourists" offer edible landscapes and tight-knit neighbors

BY ALYN FICARD

Seat Filler

The Vermont Cedar Chair Company is selling pretty

BY KIAN CHANG WARD

Lobby Ambitions

Tour an artful Rochester home

BY PAMELA POLETEN

High Hopes

How to make a vertical garden

BY CAROLYN FEN



ON THE COVER

Kristi Mackay and Dean Hendryglowen this Rochester home located above GutTwin Gallery. Flip to page 16 to see more photos of it. Photo by Gabrielle Coughenour

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'Hood, Sweet 'Hood

A guide to Burlington home buying by neighborhood

BY CAROLYN SHAPIRO

Thinking of buying a home in Burlington? Join the club. The housing market in Vermont's largest city is competitive. Demand is high; supply is low. Buyers pay more than they would for the same house outside the city, and will find slim pickings in the most highly desired areas.

Between March 2014 and March 2015, just 191 homes were sold in Burlington, notes Nancy Jenkins, managing broker of Nancy Jenkins Real Estate. The average selling price is \$320,478.

For first-time buyers, the numbers alone can be overwhelming. The key to finding the right digs in the right location? Get to know the ins and outs of Burlington's distinct neighborhoods. When you know which 'hood fits your price range and living style, your search is instantly narrowed.

"It won't be difficult to choose from," says Mike Conroy, broker and founder of Conroy & Co. Real Estate Collective. "More like singles."

To help potential buyers navigate the market, Nest has divided Burlington into five neighborhoods: the New North End, the Old North End, downtown, the Hill and the North End. Read on to see what each has to offer.

REAL ESTATE

Source: Office of Vermont
cabinetry March 4, 2014
to March 3, 2013. Source:
Hampshire Journal of Real Estate

New North End

Highly sought after S40s and S50s properties in the New North End offer suburban perks. Here, city dwellers have the chance to own a garage and a bigger yard—and they'll gain access to more parks and green space than in any other part of Burlington.

Of all the city neighborhoods, the most homes are sold in the New North End. According to Zillow's figures, it accounted for 73 of the 190 sales in the past 12 months. Buyers will generally find more reasonable prices for properties in better condition.

But folks at the northern end of the neighborhood face a pretty long commute to downtown stores and restaurants and Interstate 88. North Avenue carries heavy traffic as the "one-way-in, one-way-out" access road, making it "the biggest drawback of the New North End," says Suzanne Johnson, a real estate agent with RE/MAX. "That keeps the prices a little lower."

EDGEHEDGE: North Avenue near Telephone Cemetery and up to the northern city line, with the Interstate and Winooski River to the east.

AVERAGE SELLING PRICE: \$249,830

HOT SPOTS

Appletree Point, very exclusive with homes overlooking Lake Champlain and costing as much as \$1 million, some with private beach access, the northeast area, where some homes have river views, the lower part of North Avenue, below Killamby Drive, with more modestly priced homes still close to beaches.



PRICE: Ethos Allen Park, Luddy Park, North Beach Park, Winooski Valley Park District

CLOSEST SCHOOLS: Burlington High School, Lyman C. Hunt Middle School, J.J. Flynn Elementary School, C.P. Smith Elementary School

POINTS OF INTEREST: Easy access to bike path, proximity to grocery stores, pharmacies and dry cleaners, Ethos Allen Homebased Museum, Starr Farm Dog Park and soccer field, Gordon H. Paquette Ice Arena, Route 127 connector to Old North End or points north.

Old North End

Many of the properties date back to the 1800s, in what was Burlington's first residential area. But they're showing their age and can be a bit run down. Student apartments dominate a large portion of the housing stock, which makes the buying selection scarce. Only 19 Old North End homes sold in the past 12 months, according to Zillow's data.

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New North End

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'Hood, Sweet 'Hood

The Old North End offers the most ethnic, racial and socioeconomic diversity in Burlington. It also has a cool vibe that makes it appeal to hipsters, Gen-Y types. Home buyers can expect more noise and traffic and little privacy from their neighbors. But they'll have easy access to downtown.

"Walkability is huge when it comes to living in Burlington," says Alison Barges, Jenkins' daughter and a living/wellness partner at her firm. "That's what made the Old North End. That's what brought it back into popularity."

BOUNDARIES: Pearl Street to Manhattan Drive, and North Avenue to North Prospect Street

AVERAGE SELLING PRICE: \$266,685

HOT SPOTS: Lakeside Terrace, overlooking the lake and the old Morris power plant, now slated for redevelopment; stretch between Intervale Avenue and Manchester Drive, with small lots but fewer students

PARKS: Battery Park, Roosevelt Park, Pioneer Park, small pocket parks and playgrounds tucked between neighborhood streets

CLOSEST SCHOOLS: Sisterhenry Academy at Lawrence's Barrens, Integrated Arts Academy at HO Wheeler

POINTS OF INTEREST: Numerous neighborhood cafes and coffee shops; ethnic grocers on North Street; the Old Center for the Dramatic Arts and North End Studios

Downtown

Downtown Burlington doesn't rival much in the way of single-family housing, but there are plenty of condos. Some are in new buildings — such as Stratos on St. Paul Street — with beautiful lake views and high price tags.

Living in the heart of Burlington allows easy, walkable access to the Church Street Marketplace; dozens of restaurants, nightclubs and art venues; and loads of events. But you trade convenience and culture for noise and city bugs.

BOUNDARIES: Between Pearl and Maple streets, from South Union to Lake Street

AVERAGE SELLING PRICE: \$400,187 (includes condos)

HOT SPOTS: The south side, around Maple and King streets, with old townhomes housing lower Church and St. Paul streets, with heavy traffic but more single-family options; Lake Street condos

PARKS: Battery Park, Waterfront Park, City Hall Park

CLOSEST SCHOOLS: Edmunds Elementary and Middle schools

POINTS OF INTEREST: The Flynn Center for the Performing Arts; Merrill's Box Cinema; GCHQ Looby Center for Lake Champlain issues; the waterfront, City Market; the farmers market. Walk or hop on the shuttle to the University of Vermont and Medical Center

The Fall

30 Installation Road
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South End

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The Hill

Home buyers who want, and can't afford, four bed rooms or more should look on the Hill. The grand dames of Burlington housing tend to be surrounded by big yards and tall old trees.

High above the rest of the city, the Hill offers late views. A trip to and from downtown requires a heart-pumping, near-lightening walk on steep streets.

Prices are just as steep. "If you want to spend \$350,000 or less, there's certain parts of the Hill section where you won't find anything," Conway says. However, it's quiet and safe, with little through traffic.

"And you'll hold your value," Johnson notes.

BOUNDARIES: South Union Street to South Prospect Street, Pearl Street to Prospect Pierway

AVERAGE SELLING PRICE: \$460,205

HOT SPOTS: Ledge Road, where houses can run \$600,000 and up, Cliff and Bennett streets, the old-site of Overlake Park

PARKS: University of Vermont greens and fields

CLOSEST SCHOOLS: Edenwade Elementary and Middle schools, Marie Christ School

POINTS OF INTEREST: Memorial Auditorium, Burlington Country Club, Royal Tyler Theatre at UVM, Recital Hall at UVM Redstone Campus

South End

The South End offers an urban location with suburban benefits: quiet streets, larger yards, community cohesion and easy access to I-89. It's the most popular for young, urban professionals. Barges say, desiring it a hot neighborhood. "You probably have to buy fast and buy high."

Historic date back to the turn of the 20th century. "Barges like the style of home there," Barges says, referring to the American Craftsman and Sears & Roebuck construction and Cape. "There are a lot of older and vintage" options.

The southern end of the neighborhood, though farther from downtown, is close to the boarding Pine Street acts corridor, making it "very desirable," Johnson says. "It is there a place on the market it dips pretty fast."

BOUNDARIES: Real estate agents disagree as to exactly where the South End begins in Burlington. "In Corvair, it starts just south of Main Street; others consider King and Maple streets part of the downtown area. Barges defines the northern boundary as Marble Avenue, with the "end" stretching all the way to the southern city line.

AVERAGE SELLING PRICE: \$362,704

HOT SPOTS: The Five Sisters area, named for its enclosure of Catherine, Charlotte, Caroline, Margaret and Maria streets, is closer to downtown and very popular, though lots are smaller and houses closer together; the blocks between Flynn and Stone streets, such as Regency and Lyman streets, have bigger yards and proximity to Shelburne Road (U.S. 89, South Cove, a more exclusive and expensive area with a private beach, is tucked southwest of Oakledge Park.

PARKS: Stanley Park, Callahan Park, Oakledge Park

CLOSEST SCHOOLS: Champlaine Elementary School

POINTS OF INTEREST: South End Arts District, including ArtBot restaurant and performance venue, galleries, eclectic shops, Citrus Cider tasting room, and Speeder & Earth Coffee, South End Kitchen and Lake Champlaine Chocolates

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Village Greens

Vermont "agrihoods" offer edible landscapes and tight-knit neighbors

BY KEN PICARD

Not so very long ago, a farm, dairy, vegetable garden or orchard surrounded nearly every Vermont home.

People lived and worked close to the land because that's where the bulk of their food came from.

Then came the postwar housing boom, industrial agriculture and the rise of the American suburb. Subdivisions sprouted, and mountain farms replaced the average housewife's fields.

But as the aging grew, everything did in new ways. The latest trend in American subdivisions is "agrihoods," or residential neighborhoods that offer residents working farms on the premises. When suburbanites previously attracted prospective buyers with swimming pools, golf courses and tennis courts, a new generation of homebuyers is being lured back to the land—without having to give up their day jobs.

Admittedly, the agrihood concept isn't exactly new to the Green Mountain State, where age-centric communities have gone by various names and incarnations.

"I've heard of cohousing, intentional neighborhoods and eco-villages. But

"agrihoods?" That's a new one," says Ted Montgomery, owner and principal architect of Grotonville Architects Montgomery designed, and still lives at, Ten Stones, an intentional community in Charlotte. Built in 1990 on 85 acres, it has 17 primarily owned houses, each on one-third to three-quarters of an acre, plus a common house, where residents prepare and share meals weekly.

About 40 acres of environmentally owned land were set aside for passive conservation, including five to 10 that are used for raising crops and other ag activities. Ten Stones has a CSA (community-supported agriculture) farm as well as chicken coops for eggs, beehives for honey and a commercial composting operation, C/P Compost Co.

Ten Stones, which Montgomery first conceived for the 1972 senior design in architecture at the University of Cincinnati, is now home to about 50

people. Montgomery calls it a "culture within a land," where most of the residents have met each other's extended families and formed the strong social cohesion that comes from working the land and regularly breaking bread together.

"It's like taking the trappers or covered wagons and huddling around the fire," he says. "A lot of this stuff is embedded in our DNA as a social species."

Similar communities have sprouted across Vermont in recent years, including some with a heavier emphasis on commercial agriculture. Cobb Hill Cohousing in Hartland, completed in 2000, converted two former dairy farms on 120 acres into an agrihood of 23 eco-friendly houses that mix single-family homes, duplexes and apartments.

With more than 60 residents, Cobb Hill remains committed to its social



REAL ESTATE



ritains of promoting sustainable living through small-scale food production. Cobb has at least 10 commercial food operations on-site, producing milk, cheese, frozen yogurt, mushrooms, eggs, honey, lamb, beef and maple syrup.

But while Cobb Hill residents are expected to pitch in on various chores and duties for the community — stacking firewood, maintaining paths, cooking and cleaning in the common house — residents are not required to be farmers to live there. As Cobb Hill's statement of principles makes clear, "We will not equate people's worth with the dollar amount they can command in the market. We will assume that each person's time, capabilities, obligations and pleasures are neither more nor less important than each other person's."

One of Vermont's newest agrivillages in South Burlington's South Village. Designed and built as a "traditional neighborhood development" — an alternative to suburban sprawl — South Village sits on 120 acres, more than 70 percent of which are permanently protected from future development. Residents share access to common land that includes woods, meadows and wetlands, as well as a five-acre organic farm and a one-acre photovoltaic solar array.

Rolly Pake, of Coldwell Banker Hickok & Boardman Realty, is virtually described as South Village's broker, marketing director and media spokesperson. "Some people joke that I'm the South Village mayor," she notes.

ILLUSTRATION: JEFFREY

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Village Greens

Nearly completed, South Village's phase one includes about 120 units, she says. Phase two, which is already permitted, will add another 98 units of townhouses and single-family homes. The community also has a CSA run by a professional farmer, pick-potato gardens, edible landscapes and raised-bed gardens for those who want to do some of their own growing. There's also an area designed for raising chickens.

Though Polak admits it's more costly for builders to set aside so much land for farming and conservation, ultimately those expenses add value for homeowners, financially and socially.

"This makes sense to me, especially in Vermont, where we have so much land that our production so much more food on a local level," she says. "It seems to be something people really want. Everyone who's here definitely chose this community because of its nature and the farm."



TOP LEFT: Chickens at Colburn's Collaborative Farm (CCLF) in Colburn

TOP RIGHT: First phase opening of South Village Commons (SVCC) in South Village

MIDDLE LEFT: Members of the Vermont Community Garden (VCG) in South Village

MIDDLE RIGHT: South Village Commons (SVCC) in South Village

BOTOM RIGHT: South Village Commons (SVCC) in South Village

For more info, visit cclbfarm.org/southvillage.com



Seat Filler

The Vermont Cedar Chair Company is sitting pretty

BY XILEN CHIANG-WAREEN

Upbeat music fills the Vermont Cedar Chair Company warehouse in Hardwick, where energetic young staffers are cutting, sanding, assembling and packaging its wooden outdoor chairs. Owner Jason Lutz, 30, is on the phone, making sure everything is on track for the three regional trade shows his company reps will attend the following weekend.

"Have a seat," Lutz tells me with a confident grin, gesturing toward one of his chairs. "It's really comfortable."

He's not exaggerating: Lutz's chairs combine an Adirondack-style frame with a woven, hammock-style back and seat. Unlike the stiff wooden barrels customary of outdoor furniture, these innovative "bunzacks" are flexible and hug your body.

It's no wonder the company has grown exponentially since its launch five years ago: VCCC's products are sold at local, national and international trade shows and in brick-and-mortar retailers. For the second year in a row, sales are up more than 100 percent.

While Lutz and his six-person team churn out 16 to 20 handmade chairs per day, they can't always stay apace of demand. They've had to run away to large orders, but Lutz is honing the manufacturing process to keep up.

The secret to success? It's

twofold. He spent years perfecting the standout design of his product, and he's committed to sourcing his materials in an ecologically responsible way.

"Outdoor furniture is notoriously uncomfortable," Lutz points out. "We offer a comfortable alternative — and you don't have to worry about pillows."

Lutz developed his original chair concept during a summer spent working in *Arumae* between his junior and senior years at Ohio State University. He became fascinated with the natural bamboo that grew there, he says. The distinctive-looking plants are strong but lightweight and, when harvested, don't rot easily.

"[I] was very intrigued by it as a material," Lutz remembers. "People don't want to work to maintain their chairs. They want to put it outside and forget about it."

Lutz initially aspired to start a fast-trade furniture company that would employ *Arumae*ans, though those plans didn't pan out when he returned to school. However, something deeper had come out of that summer: a prototype of the chair he now manufactures and sells. "As soon as we had a prototype, I knew we had something," he says. "Everybody loved it."

Lutz completed college and moved to Vermont, where he worked



Jason Lutz

PHOTOS COURTESY OF VERMONT CEDAR CHAIR COMPANY

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as a forecaster and considered his next steps. As fate would have it, his mother had purchased property in Swanton and hired a logger to thin out a cedar stand in her yard. Instead, the logger cleared it entirely, leaving piles of scraps behind. When Lutz arrived to survey the damage, he had a light-bulb moment.

"It was like, Wow, they left everything I need to make furniture," he recalls. "They took everything that they could use and left anything that was under four inches in diameter. And that's what we use."

And so he began the Vermont Cedar Chair Company, using cedar scraps from the Vermont logging industry, as well as cedar wood from a local "moon and pie" logging mill two miles upstream from his warehouse. The latter, used in VCCC's Swanton line, sells at a slightly lower price point and has a more polished look than the rough-hewn industry leftovers.

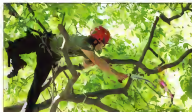
The company has also expanded its offerings, producing rockers, ottomans and lamps. And Lutz is launching a new business endeavor: the Timber Chair Company, inspired by their summer in

Jamaica. It produces the same chair from bamboo that's sustainably sourced and manufactured in Vietnam.

Lutz strives to leave no waste with his wood, and his chair seats are woven with natural maple fiber. Their elegantly rustic aesthetics has been a hit with customers. Plus, these hand-cut natural materials stand up to time and weather—even to years of exposure in harsh New England winters.

It's clear these well-designed chairs are a labor of love for Lutz. And, as he discovered when he was laying the groundwork for his line, that passion is partly genetic. "My mom said to me, 'Do you want to know why you like to make furniture?' and she pulled out the family album," Lutz says. Turns out, three generations back, Lutz's family in Michigan owned what he says was one of the largest furniture companies in the world at the time: the Grand Rapids Chair Company. "I had no idea," Lutz says. "It's amazing."

Years after, he took six chairs to a trade show in Whitefield and sold out in an afternoon. "The next," Lutz concludes, "is history." 🍂



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Lofty Ambitions

Tour an artful Rochester home

BY PAMELA POLSTON

PHOTOS BY GABRIELLE COUGHENOUR

Unique, unorthodox, surprising: Those are just some of the adjectives that come to mind when one describes the residence of Anni Mackay and Doon Hinderyckx.

For starters, the two live above an art gallery 800mg alongside Route 100 in tiny Rochester, Vt., Big Green Gallery is responsible to most, its circular motif on the front — like a giant Buddha's nose — “really irritates the public,” gallery owner Mackay says. That shape is a nod to vertically in a cylindrical, 44-foot-high tower at the back of the building. The fairy tale tower contains a book-lined spiral staircase leading to Mackay and Hinderyckx's home. Climb a little higher, and you find a room that's not a bedroom but an artist's haven with a 180-degree view of the expansive landscape, the forest and the town's 19th-century cemetery beyond.

Formerly a nondescript private home, constructed in 1912, the building had just two occupants prior to Mackay and Hinderyckx. Only a driveway separates it from the latter's business, Green Mountain Bikes — from which, for 25 years, Hinderyckx had a view of the house. In 2004, the couple decided to buy it “on a whim.” The following year, they got married.

“Our relationship doesn't survive renovations,” notes Mackay. “But this was fun.” A skilled builder, Hinderyckx adds, “It helped that I could do a lot of the work myself.” He also called on his stepfather from California to lend a hand.





But first, Mackay and Hinderykx tapped nearby architect Robert Mohl Finkle to rework the place and draw up plans. And did he ever: The entire house oozes character and is full of inventive spaces and thoughtful details. Take a look.

OPEN FLOOR PLAN

From the rear wall of the old house, Mackay and Hinderykx built a 400-square-foot addition. The new walls are subtly tinted an off-white, toward the high, pitched roof.

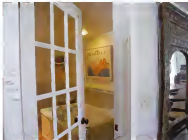
Most of this was unheated attic space, says Mackay. In one corner of the pleasant, airy living room, an antique desk dominates. In the factored space, which is an informal dining area with a dark wood table runs alongside tall windows in the back. In another corner beside the lower door, a partial wall defines an open closet and white jackets hang on pegs and boots cluster on the floor. A small wood stove is the only heat source, bolstered, Hinderykx says, by triple-pane windows and three-and-a-half inches of spray insulation in the walls.



LOFTY IMAGINATIONS 24 P. 58

ARTISTIC TOUCHES

Works of art are everywhere — or, the whole walls and arranged on floor shelving. Not surprisingly for a gallery, Mackay has a discerning eye, and it shows in the objects she chooses to live with. Artifacts and contemporary pieces merge comfortably, a smattering of imported furnishings — such as an enormous mirror frame from Morocco — give a nod to worldly influences. Picking up one of a pair of ceramic curiosities (the brush, says Mackay, admits that the English in red) is prone to a little eclectic collecting.



Lofty Ambitions 4911

RICH ORIENT HIGHLIGHTS

The object of art provides a lot to look at, but it's hard not just to look up. That's because two somewhat alarming architectural features provide access to the building's upper living spaces.

The first is a salvaged spiral staircase, sans handrail that climbs at a steep overhead landing. The second is a catwalk—a thick plank some six inches wide—that projects the room to the height of a conventional ceiling and leads to a small loft. It's a vertigo-inducing walk, but the spot is inviting, flooded with light from cathedral-like windows and scattered with pillows. Children love it, says Mackay, and so does the family cat. She warns that no one has ever fallen from the plank, but admits that the multilevel home might be challenging for the elderly or infirm.

A ROOM WITH A VIEW

On the other side of that spiral staircase, toward the Route 100 side of the building, are a drawer-lined hallway and a small efficient kitchen whose angled windows look out on downtown Rochester. "We call it 'open TV,'" Mackay quips. At the very front, nestled under the sloping roof, the couple installed a law. Asian style dining area with cushions on the floor. The space supplies an elegant symmetry with the loft at the back, and typifies the smart use of nooks and crannies in this house.

"In fact, it's not a very big place, we've created all these cozy little spaces," Mackay says.

FORM MEETS FUNCTION

Unusual details catch the eye in the kitchen, with its lack of knobs or picked white cabinet doors and drawers. Instead, there are finger loops for pulling. Date-recessed lighting subtly illuminates the hallway and is built into walls of wooden bowls with drawers. Storage for coats is hidden behind the entry.





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High Hopes

How to make a vertical garden

BY CAROLYN FOX

It's been a long, cold winter, and Vermonters are ready for spring. That much was clear on February 27, the opening day of the Vermont Flower Show. Forming the kind of slow-moving lines more often seen at Disney World, hundreds of people shuffled through an elaborate indoor garden display. They stopped to smell the tulips and to pet the lush green grass like it was something they'd never seen before — or, perhaps, thought they'd never see again.

Thankfully, warmer days are right around the corner, and many of us are starting to plan our own gardens. For renters and city dwellers, however, space constraints make gardening a challenge. What do you do when your landlord won't let you dig up the back yard, or when you're limited to a 3-by-6-foot balcony?

Easy. Plant a vertical garden, period.

Vertical gardens are a sweet alternative for folks who don't have a lot of horizontal space to work with. And they're a major trend in gardening right now, because those "living walls," as they're also called, look like a green work of art. If you're not a wall or a fence, you can turn it into a

home for edibles, animals and even persons.

These upright gardens take many shapes. Heavy folks make them out of wooden shipping pallets, old bookcases or even hanging shoe racks. Once constructed, the "gardens" require little maintenance beyond basic fertilizing and watering — there's no weeding or kneeling. Plus, they instantly beautify your space.

Want sports? A simple four-eye-catching vertical display by Gardener's Supply at the Flower Show: The garden-

ers had simply attached small potted plants to a hanging wooden crate with wire. Inspired, we went home and built a larger vertical garden.

Using a trellis. Indoors, this setup would be great for seed starting or growing fresh herbs for the kitchen. Outdoors, the sky's the limit. And it's mobile. Pick it up to move it outdoors or in, and even from room to room around your house for the best light. ☀

MATERIALS

- Floral stems wire (and gauge)
- Lightweight potted plants of your choice
- Wooden trellis (make your own, or purchase from a home-improvement store)
- 5 hooks

DIRECTIONS

Begin by wrapping a length of floral stem wire around the top of a potted plant. Twist the ends of the wire together to hold things snug against the pot. With the ends of the wire, form a sturdy loop from which the pot can hang. Repeat this step for all of your pots.

Lean your trellis against a wall where the plants can get the appropriate amount of sunlight. Along one end of it, it's best to have the trellis. Use glue to fasten it to the frame. If necessary, using a second piece from the other end of the hook, support this step for all your plants.

Mount your plants on trellis: For an outdoor trellis, use a hose or watering can to saturate the soil. Indoors, use a spray bottle. For a light seed, that's all you need. As your plants grow, remove them from their pots to water and let drain out the soil.





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April 25, 2015

Collage, Painting and Drawing

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